

## ***Eight Views of a Landscape that Never Fully Materialises***

### **AN EXHIBITION OF THE ARCHIVE OF ASTURIAN ARTISTS ARCHIVE**

#### **CONCEPT**

The moving image proposes an art of seduction. Fascinate by the promise of a present that repeats -looped- through distant space and time. This is, roughly, what is proposed by television: instead of going out to meet the world, introduce it into our sitting room. Closeness and immediacy as a result of technological development, which, far from proposing a new paradigm, drinks from previous models of representation.

As compared to a scenario that hides its depth behind the black paint to ensure illusion, also looking at the territory we use to recall only the surface. The landscape is, actually, a skin that hides successive layers of the past where are registered, under the action of the human being, ruins and scrap of history.

The eight video pieces included in this exhibition show how all territory is subjected to a series of physical and virtual layers. The landscape is a body: a mental place and a physical space, where the real dimensions come into friction with our fears, desires and finally the language that tries to shape them. As highlighted many fables back home, home, once left behind, never returns to be the same, as much as it looks. Or as it happens with contemporary experiences about the construction of identity, despite the biological certainties, there is a huge range of intermediate points between the two sexes. To summary, humanity and nature are joined by a mesh that, in a mimetic way, draw metaphors in one direction and in the other, as if to underline the intimate dependence of both spheres.

Built from the Archivo de Artistas Astuianos, *Eight Views of a Landscape that Never Fully Materialises* shows different ways of approaching the contemporary video production. While trying to exhume the past of our present through the supposed objectivity of the documentary form, fiction always ends returning its old ways. While challenges traditional dramaturgy and its illusionist tricks, its role is to transmit our understanding of the world: an artifact capable of bringing our relationship with the world near to a more human scale.

**DATES:** 18 of March 2015 - 21 of June 2015

**ARTISTS:** Ramón Lluís Bande, Elisa Cepedal, Colectivo DV, Cristina Ferrández, David Ferrando, Alicia Jiménez, Marcos Merino, Amalia Ulman

**CURATOR:** **Alfredo Aracil** (A Coruña, 1984) is the Responsible of Projects in LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial, of Gijón, where he has

curated yet *Usos y formas, Traslaciones* and great part of the different series of *Universo vídeo -Prácticas experimentales, El otro audiovisual español, Geopolíticas y La Vidéothèque*; as well as *Traslaciones*. Máster oficial del Programa de Cultura Visual e Historia del Arte Contemporáneo de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid y el MNCARS, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, he has been also curator of audiovisual cycles as *Leer las imágenes, leer el tiempo*, for that museum, or *El primer viaje*, a monographic exhibition of the artist Irene de Andrés, in the gallery *Espacio Líquido*, de Gijón.

## PRODUCTION:

# laboral

Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial

**VENUE:** Mediateca Expandida de LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial

## ASTURIAN ARTISTS ARCHIVE

With material of about 200 artists, active from 1950 to the present, and always in process of growing, the Asturian Artists Archive aims to become a fundamental tool in drawing a map of the Asturian culture. The archive has a physical part of material donated by artists and institutions (catalogues, magazines, brochures, invitations, press clippings, audiovisual material...) and a digital part available at the equipment of *Mediateca\_Archivo LABoral*. The latter one presents in detail the work of each artist through a biographical overview and a selection of his works.

Beyond the mere accumulation of materials, the Asturian Artists Archive poses the need to mobilize, through archiving strategies, communication and exhibition, materials contained in their bottoms. LABoral periodically launches calls addressed to the artists belonging to this archive. In addition, this resource is often used by researchers and curators involved in the programming of the Centro de Arte. Ultimately, it is about building a true community, designing among all new ways of visibility for artists in it.

List of Asturian artists belonging to the archive [+]

## From the archive to the territory

By Alfredo Aracil, Curator of the exhibition

Like the landscape mentioned in the title of this show, since its creation the Archive of Asturian Artists has not ceased to change, gradually incorporating successive generations of artists that are, either born in Asturias, or residing in the region. The documents that it features show how the working tools have changed while the contents are not the same any more: from painting, drawing or sculpture we have gone to other practices such as photography, performance or, finally, the electronic arts, both visual and sound, less redundant, more open to putting representation and reality in contact.

Needles to say, video has long ceased to be an esoteric technology. The time of magic has passed: Working with the moving image has become, since the 1990s, one of the most popular practices in contemporary creation. With the arrival of cinema, and then video, artists no more needed symbols and signs to represent a reality that, now, using the camera, they can make visible with real objects. According to Nicolas Bourriaud<sup>1</sup>, with video technology “we can represent the real without any linguistic mediator whatsoever”. Thus, landscapes are placed in front of the camera so that, without a need for a style, they remain registered in a rigorous present, in an eternal time that is, by definition, doomed to repeat itself. The Lumière brothers at the beginning of the 20th century said that cinema was an invention with no future. However, as Juan-Luc Godard reminded us, it is the art of the eternal present.

And now that we are speaking about our present, few things can define the time that we are living better than what Jacques Derrida named archive fever: that fever for accumulating information, somehow nostalgic, melancholic and therapeutic, that has turned present into an eternal return to the pasta, where fashions and tastes, updated, return once and again, click after click, while the knowledge building process is continually speeding up. It is also true that with each new support storing and sharing has become easier, as it is a fact too that these formats become increasingly vulnerable to the passing of time. While a stone-carving would last for thousands of years, a pen drive, hopefully, would last one decade. Therefore, in view of the current speed of accumulating data, discoveries and, in general, any developments, we must create a bulletproof memory, a device capable of showcase those things that go unnoticed, forgotten or, simply, excluded. Moreover, this memory needs a certain level of territorialisation as a strategy to anchor the subject to the space: that is, creating a site, a location, whether physical or digital, to be used for consultations, like for example archive.org, the site where Rick Prelinger has been collecting orphan films.

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<sup>1</sup> Bourriaud, Nicolás. *Formas de vida*. Ceandec, Murcia, 2014 (Pág. 30)

The machines that we use for chatting at work, as well as the search engines that we use on the Internet, run on a classificatory logic that enables them to filter contents following a certain value. These are recovery algorithms that provide an exact value, and an order to, ultimately, shape our way of thinking and communicating. In this scenario of allegedly well-ordered accumulation, under no circumstances ensures a better and deeper knowledge, projects like the Archive of Asturian Artists are aimed at generating visibility, while at the same time drawing a territory: In other words, they forge a retrievable history while, ultimately, they structure a site that hosts the landscape of the latest Asturian art. Just like “colonialism or collecting, the archive introduces any record in a big legal structure”<sup>2</sup>: It is a legitimacy tool that, at the same time, legitimates the artists it represents. Art, at the end of the day, always justifies what legitimates it as art: The system justifies as art what normalises it as a system.

It is amazing how the Earth, with its successive layers and strata, can be imagined as an archive of the past. Literally, we can as well say that on top of a surface, through history, several sediment layers accumulate to form the current landscape. We could also talk about how the universe, the result of a natural process that lasts as long as time itself, is also an archive. In it, from the absolute present, we see what at some time disappeared. In the ground where archaeologists dig, there are sometimes bones and fossils or organisms and objects that were once alive. There is nothing as natural as culture. In fact, nature is one of the central topics of very different (or similar) cultural expressions such as art or science, that are, put very briefly, practices or knowledge based on the accumulation of previous experiences.

Just like a site that changes when in contact with human actions and, also, because of the direct action of nature forces on its face, the aim of the Archive of Asturian Artists is to change. The idea is to incorporate more and more artists as the Asturian reality changes. New perspectives on reality that, by being part of the Archive, will always be present, although, at the same time indexes of the past. One cannot create turning a blind eye on memory, even if it is ruins or rubble, a substrate is always necessary as a point of departure. At the end of the day each landscape has a past.

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<sup>2</sup> Moraza, Juan Luis. *Ornamento y ley*, Cendeac, Murcia, 2007. (Pág. 17)

**Ramón Lluís Bande** (Gijón, 1972)

**Llara**, 2014

HD Video, 3' 40"

In her film *The Atlantic Man* Marguerite Duras said, "you will look at what you see. But you will look at it absolutely. You will try to look at it until your sight fails, until it makes itself blind, and even through this blindness you must try again to look. Until the end." Llara, the main character in this work, walks through ruins in a natural setting: a landscape that is about to be devoured by nature and the passing of time which transmits a number of physical sensations to the beholder. Our bodies are then assaulted by the heat and the sound of the environment. And as Llara walks, the drought becomes more and more physical. Or at least apparently so, for Llara's walk is actually fictional: it takes place in a disjointed time that is not our own, a time heralding the possibility of many different times.

**Elisa Cepedal** (Barredos, 1982)

**Ay pena**, 2012

16mm transferred HD, 19'52"

Going back to the same place is totally impossible. With the passing of time the world inevitably changes. And so, people we once knew become strangers to us, and the places we were familiar with become new. And this is true even if it seems that the clock grinds to a halt and in our absence things have remained the same. Similarly to one of John Ford's westerns, when we cross the threshold of our home it is impossible to go back through the same door and feel that we have returned to the point at which we left it. Even though they might seem to be synonymous, homesickness and nostalgia are not necessarily the same thing: in our mind, all landscapes recall or bring to mind another one that, in fact, is never the same.

**Colectivo DV.** Diana Coandă (Resita, Rumanía, 1974) / Víctor Velasco (Avilés, 1986)

**360º**, 2015

HD Video, 4' 53"

Ever since the beginning of culture, art and nature have been connected through a complex relationship of successive imitations; a cascade of reproduction that leaves us unable to discern the origin, if indeed there is one to discern. Through twelve settings succeeding one another from left to right, like when reading, a white sculptural element passes through natural settings: a forest, a beach, or industrial locations where nature has been totally erased by the work of humans.

The beginning of this journey, which ultimately turns back on itself, is the home: originally, four walls precariously built. And although its function is to separate the human being from the environment, it at once takes its formal inspiration from the latter.

**Cristina Ferrández** (Alicante, 1974)

***Erosión***, 2011

PAL Video 16:9, 3'59"

The result of a residency spent on the Isle of Portland, off the south coast of England, this work explores various processes of erosion: from the slow yet relentless working of nature on the limestone cliffs of the island to other artificial processes which industrially transform the environment through repetitive and mechanised action. Indeed, we are actually talking about the same process which, layer upon layer, cut after cut, leaves its mark on the skin of things, thus disclosing the reciprocal inspiration of natural and human processes.

**David Ferrando Giraud** (Negreira, A Coruña, 1978)

***Road Movie - Perpetuum Mobile***, 2008

Digital Betacam 16:9, 3'03"

The widespread acceptance of the automobile as a means of transport in the twentieth century led to a new form of representation that interconnected motion, duration and landscape. It brought about a paradigm shift that ought to be viewed in parallel to the emergence of technologies of the image, including cinema. And whereas travelling by car offers us an unrefined, incorporeal perspective of motion through the territory, the road accident would be like a moment of carnal exchange between the body and the machine, between nature and artifice. In this video, David Ferrando Giraud demystifies the *mise en scène* of accidents: like a wheel that never stops turning while suspended in the air, the camera rotates 360°. Finally, the loop crosses the axis that reveals what is usually hidden behind the mechanism.

**Alicia Jiménez** (Gijón, 1977)

***Aliento***, 2015

PAL Video. 1' 14"

Locked within a picture and with four clearly defined edges that foreclose any attempt to overstep the confines of representation, any given landscape is an image and, in essence, an illusion. However, with the birth of cinema, that image became so real that it is often mistaken for life itself. Ultimately, the wind moving the tree tops is the same wind that sweeps over our body, and the falling rain is the same rain that wets us. However, imprisoned behind that glass where our gaze is actually inscribed, the landscape is condemned to repeat itself eternally.

**Marcos Merino** (Gijón, 1973)

***A noite é necesaria***, 2014

HD Video, 4' 44"

*Hay homes cheos de sombra  
homes a contralús  
que che fan ver a Deus  
como unha mar de lus.  
A Noite é necesaria  
pra que ti poidas ver*

*sobre medo i o mal  
as estelas arder.*

Xosé María Díaz Castro. *Nimbos*, 1961

Part of the project promoted by the Acto de Primavera blog, *A noite é necesaria* is inspired by the poem of the same name and records variations of light, shadows and colours. The moving image appears to be the perfect tool to portray changes in the landscape by adding the factor of time to depiction, which frequently portrays a reality that is not what our eyes usually perceive. As in the case at hand, it is then when the lyrical function enters into play, producing a succession of fantastic experiences. A romantic vision of the world which cinema has nothing but strengthened thanks to its ability to lend ghosts a body.

**Amalia Ulman** (Gijón, 1989)

***The Future Ahead***, 2014

HD Video, 16' 22"

Video technology makes it possible to reflect on images while they interact with one another in the body of the narrative. Removed from the dialectics of cinema, digital editing allows the text to be reassembled, to be put on hold and even go backwards. This new landscape was undoubtedly a prequel of the Internet realm, where space and time have definitely taken on a different meaning. In her work, Amalia Ulman connects this new narrative horizon with the hyper-design of bodies at a time when plastic surgery is one of the keys to understanding culture today. From designing the environment to designing ourselves, through the changing image of the pop icon Justin Bieber, this essay highlights how identities are no longer constructed in a fixed manner, but are in constant transformation, revealing interesting vanishing points. Image and consumerism are at the very heart of the struggle to colonise the body.



**Ramón Lluis Bande. *Llora*, 2014. Video HD, 3' 40"**



**Elisa Cepedal. *Ay pena*, 2012. Video HD, 19'55"**



**Colectivo DV. Diana Coandă / Víctor Velasco. *360º*, 2015  
Video, 4' 53"**





**Cristina Ferrández. *Erosión*, 2011. Video HD, 3'59''**



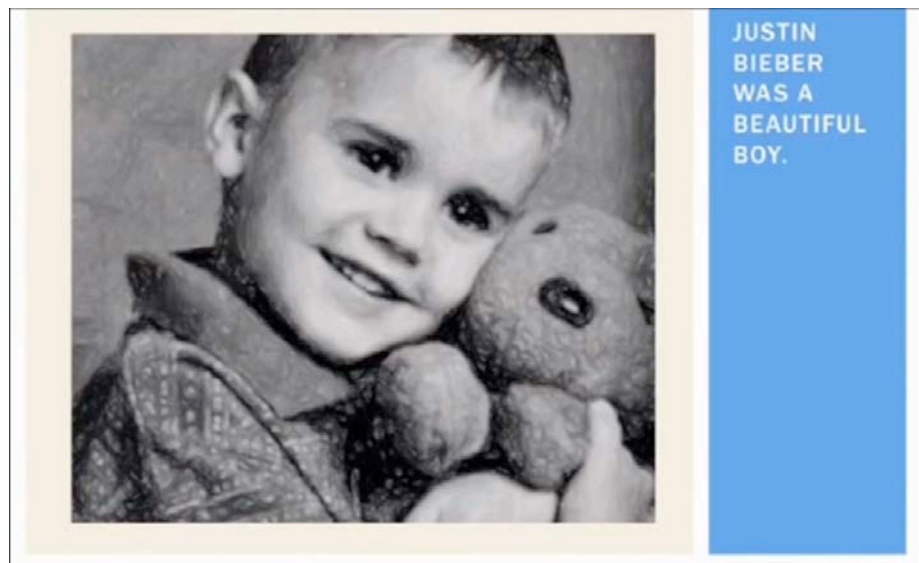
**David Ferrando Giraud. *Road Movie - Perpetuum Mobile*, 2008  
Video 12'18''**



**Alicia Jiménez. *Aliento*, 2015. Video. 1' 14''**



**Marcos Merino.** *A noite é necesaria*, 2014. Video HD, 4' 44"



**Amalia Ulman.** *The Future Ahead*, 2014. Video, 16' 22"

## The Laboral Foundation

The LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial Foundation is a cultural body to serve the general interest, as well as the governing body of the art centre. The aims of the Foundation as described in Article 6.1 of the statutes are “to promote and disseminate art and industrial creation through the management of LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial.”

### **BOARD OF PATRONS OF LA FUNDACIÓN LA LABORAL. CENTRO DE ARTE Y CREACIÓN INDUSTRIAL**

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## Association of Friends of LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial

The Association of Friends of LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial in Gijón is a non-profit association with its own legal personality and full capacity to act in accordance with current legislation on associations. Its aims are to promote, stimulate and support any cultural initiatives, which, in the broadest terms, have a connection with the mission and activity of the Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial.

### **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**President:** Luis Figaredo

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**Information & Mediation:** María José González and Iván Patiño  
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**Executive Assistant:** Lara Fernández  
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### **WHAT IS LABORAL?**

LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial is a space for artistic exchange. It was born with the aim of establishing an alliance between art, design, culture, industry and economic development, and aspires to become a space for interaction and dialogue between art, new technologies and industrial creation. Between its walls, it opens the way to the production, creation and research into the most recent artistic concepts. LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial is in the old Universidad Laboral as part of the set of projects developed by the Principality of Asturias for its City of Culture. Gijón, Asturias.

### **LOCATION**

LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial is located in Gijon, Asturias, at around three kilometres from the city centre. Premises originally conceived for vocational training now house the over 14,400 functional square metres that are devoted to the exhibition, research, training and production of new art and creative industries.

### **Address**

LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial  
Los Prados, 121  
33394 Gijón (Asturias)

### **Getting There**

**By car:** A-8 motorway. Take bypass on arrival to Gijon. Salida (exit) km. 385 Viesques. Follow directions to Hospital Cabueñes. Take third exit at third roundabout.

The Centre has a public car park.

### **By bus from Gijón**

The bus stop for the Centre is “Parada Universidad Laboral”. The bus lines available are the following:

Line 1 Cerillero- Hospital de Cabueñes

Line 2 Rocés- Hospital de Cabueñes

Line 4 Cerillero- Viesques- Hospital de Cabueñes

Line 18 Nuevo Gijón- Hospital de Cabueñes

### **By plane**

Closest airport: Asturias (Castrillón). Around 40 km from the Centre.

A8 motorway, direction Gijón.

### **OPENING HOURS**

#### **Winter**

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 10 am to 7 pm

Saturday and Sunday, 12 noon to 8 pm

Closed Monday and Tuesday

#### **Summer (15.06 – 15.09)**

10 am to 7 pm

Closed Monday and Tuesday

## ADMISSION

### General public

€2

### Free

Friends of LABoral, <10 years old, Gijón Citizen Card, journalists, members from ICOM (International Council of Museums)

### Free access

Every Wednesday, May 18th (International Museum Day), weekends No

## RESOURCES

**Plataforma 0\_LABoral Production Centre.** Platform 0 is a multi-purpose space. It is a centre for production, artistic research, innovation and education. It is a place for implementing ideas and trying out prototypes, with workspaces for experimentation and production with audio, video, light, electronics, processing, movement capture, computer vision and videogames. The intended audience is the local artistic and creative community as well as artists, creators or foreign researchers in residence participating in the exhibitions at LABoral.

**fabLAB Asturias.** Laboratory equipped with digital fabrication machinery providing consultancy and production tools for individual or collective creation, courses and training workshops.

**plat0.** Studio set for experimentation and research into expanded performative practices and new audio-visual forms.

**Audiovisual Laboratories.** Audio and digital video platform, with all the equipment necessary for recording, editing, production and postproduction.

**Sound LAB.** Designed as a space for experimenting in the various practices of contemporary sound art, the Sound LAB it is aimed at fostering and providing technical and creative support to contemporary art practices related with sound following four lines of action: production, exhibition, research and education.

**Media Library/Archive.** A place for the investigation, consultation and dissemination of today's art and creative industries. It features the Archive of Asturian Artists, documenting the work of creators born from the 1950s onwards.

**Chill-Out.** A place for meeting, leisure, active participation and resting.